

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 3529

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, EIND, PFOR, EAID, NS, NL

SUBJ: SURINAM AND US POLICY

REF: PARAMARIBO 324 AND 336 ; HAGUE 3526

1. SUCCESSIVE THOUGHTFUL MESSAGES (REFTELS) FROM PARAMARIBO INDICATE THAT WHILE UNCERTAINTIES STILL ABOUND ABOUT FUTURE GOS AND GON POLICIES WHICH COULD AFFECT USG AND PRIVATE INTERESTS IN SURINAM, THERE IS NO DOUBT WHATSOEVER THAT THE OLD ORDER WILL CHAGE. US POLICIES BASED ON THE STATUS QUO MUST THEREFORE BE REASSESSED, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY BE ALTERED, AS THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME EMERGES. FOR THIS REASON WE HAVE RECOMMENDED (HAGUE 3457) THAT SECTION ON SURINAM AND ANTILLES BE INSERTED FOR FIRST TIME IN NETHERLANDS EUROPARA.

2. WE BELIEVE THAT FOLLOWING PREMISES CAN SAFELY BE POSTULATED AS POINTS OF DEPARTURE FOR US POLICY MAKERS DEALING WITH SURINAM QUESTION:

(A) PROTESTANTIONS TO THE CONTRARY NOTWITHSTANDING, WE CANNOT REALISTICALLY COUNT INDEFINITELY ON SUBSTANTIAL GON INVOLVEMENT IN SECURITY OR DEVELOPMENT OF SURINAM. DUTCH LEFT-WINGERS FIND WHITE MAN'S BURDEN EMBARRASSING, SURINAM IS TOO RICH TO MEET
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CURRENT DUTCH ODA (OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT AID) CRITERIA, AND THE

DUTCH TAXPAYER SEES LITTLE MERIT IN THROWING GOOD MONEY AFTER BAD ON AN EX-COLONY WHICH HAS ALREADY COST SO MUCH IN BOTH FISCAL AND SOCIAL TERMS (E.G. THROUGH HEAVY INFLUX INTO HOLLAND OF HARD-TO-EMPLOY SURINAMERS).

(B) GOS, FOR FISCAL IF NOT IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVES, WILL TAKE MEASURES WHICH WILL HAVE EFFECT OF MAKING SURINAM'S INVESTMENT CLIMATE DECREASINGLY FAVORABLE, AT LEAST FOR COMMITTED COMPANIES LIKE SURALCO.

(C) STABLE SURINAM, FREE OF POTENTIALLY HOSTILE FOREIGN DOMINATION, IS IMPORTANT - AND PERHAPS ESSENTIAL - TO US STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IN SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN.

(D) WE CANNOT EXPECT SURINAM TO REMAIN STABLE AND FREE OF HOSTILE INFLUENCE IN THE ABSENCE OF REASONABLE PROSPECT FOR ORDERLY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH.

3. IT IS PERHAPS TOO EARLY TO ENVISAGE IN DETAIL OUR OPTIMUM POLICY REACTION TO THESE POSTULATES. THE PROCESS OF CHANGE IS STILL IN ITS INFANCY AND THE POTENTIAL VARIABLES IN THE FUTURE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SECURITY MATRIX OF THE WHOLE SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN AREA ARE LEGION. OVERT US INTRUSION INTO SURINAM (AND FOR THAT MATTER INTO THE ANTILLES) WOULD ONLY SERVE TO HASTEN DUTCH DEPARTURE, WHICH WE SHOULD SEEK TO DELAY AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. IF WE ACCEPT PREMISES IN PARA 2 ABOVE, HOWEVER, IT FOLLOWS THAT WE SHOULD START THINKING NOW, AS RECOMMENDED BY PARAMARIBO, ABOUT HOW TO FILL THE VACUUM WE EXPECT THE DUTCH TO CREATE.

4. WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE, OF COURSE, THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE IN WANTING A STABLE, SECURE SURINAM. THE DUTCH, THE FRENCH, THE EC, THE OAS, AND SURINAM'S NEIGHBORS CAN BE EXPECTED TO SHARE OUR CONCERN. AS REPORTED IN HAGUE 3376, DUTCH AID MINISTER PRONK IS ALREADY THINKING IN TERMS OF AID CONSORTIUM FOR SURINAM. WHILE HIS MOTIVE FOR THIS IS CLEARLY TO FACILITATE DUTCH DISENGAGEMENT, IT COULD PROVE BEST DEVICE FOR PROLONGING DUTCH PARTICIPATION, AS IN THE CASE OF IGGI AND INDONESIA. IT WOULD ALSO PROVIDE USEFUL FRAMEWORK FOR IFI PARTICIPATION. FINALLY SUCH A CONSORTIUM COULD, IF FORMED IN TIME, DISCOURAGE APPLICATION OF DUTCH AID FUNDS FOR NATIONALIZATION OR UNPRODUCTIVE SOCIAL PROGRAMS.

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5. AS JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION UNDER PROF. BOS GETS FURTHER DOWN THE PIKE IN DRAFTING SURINAM AID STRATEGY IN PREPARATION FOR REALM CONFERENCE NEXT FEBRUARY, WE CAN EXPECT CONSORTIUM CONCEPT TO SURFACE AGAIN. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF WE COULD HAVE SPECIFIC DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTIONS ON THIS POINT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT CONSIDERATIONS IN PARA 4 ABOVE. IN MEANTIME WE ENDORSE PARAMARIBO'S SUGGESTION THAT DEPARTMENT COUNSEL PRESENT AND POTENTIAL

AMERICAN INVESTORS IN SURINAM TO BE AS PATIENT, OPEN-MINDED AND
FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE IN THEIR DEALING WITH GOS. IN THE LONG
RUN ODA - WHETHER FROM CONSORTIUM OR DUTCH ALONE - CAN NEVER
BE WHOLE ANSWER FOR SURINAM; THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR VIABLE,
PRODUCTIVE AND PROGRESSIVE PRIVATE SECTOR.
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